



The Biddeford Beat

CITY OF BIDDEFORD WEEKLY NEWSLETTER | MONDAY, NOV 14, 2016

Volume 16.12

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mon Nov 14

4:30pm - Cable TV Committee
(Public Access Building)

5:00pm - Personnel Committee
(City Hall Council Chambers)

6:30pm - Policy Committee
(City Hall Council Chambers)

Tue Nov 15

5:00pm - Finance Committee
(City Hall Council Chambers)

5:00pm - Capital Projects Committee
(City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room)

6:00pm - City Council Meeting
(City Hall Council Chambers)

Wed Nov 16

8:00am - Downtown Task Force
(City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room)

6:00pm - Planning Board Meeting
(City Hall Council Chambers)

7:00pm - Solid Waste Management
(Public Works Facility)

Thu Nov 17

6:30pm - Airport Commission
(City Hall Council Chambers)

7:00pm - Conservation Commission
(City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room)

7:00pm - Shellfish Committee Workshop
(Biddeford Pool Fire Department)

Fri Nov 18

8:00am - Mayor's Downtown Task Force
(City Hall Mayor's Office)

For Full Calendar, [click here](#)

City to Save on Electricity Supply Costs

The City of Biddeford and the Biddeford School Department have contracted for lower electricity supply costs starting in November 2017 and are fixed until November 2020. We are currently paying a cost of \$.0744 per kilowatt hour with capacity charges added on. Capacity charges are scheduled to increase each year. That cost will be reduced to \$0.5950 per kilowatt hour and will include capacity charges. This price is for 17 of our medium sized accounts. This new contract on these accounts will save the City an estimated \$170,000 over the three year period.

The City has elected to contract for four additional medium accounts which have higher capacity values, for a two year period at a kilowatt cost of \$.05135 and will continue to pay for the capacity charges. The City will control capacity costs by curtailment during peak demand periods. *(continued on A2)*

Open Government

In an ongoing effort to improve access to public information and to conduct municipal business in an open and transparent manner, a new tab has been added to the City's website titled, *Open Government*. The tab appears at the top of the website adjacent to the *Home* tab. The information under this new tab can also be accessed directly at www.biddefordmaine.org/open.

The purpose of the *Open Government* tab is to provide quick access to items keyed to government transparency. The City selected a 10-point "Transparency Checklist" originally created by Sunshine Review, a former nonprofit promoting government transparency, as the model for its *Open Government* site. *(continued on A2)*

Biddeford Selected for York County Courthouse

After several months of searching, the York County Courthouse Site Selection Committee has chosen the former Pate property at 511-515 Elm Street here in Biddeford as the site of the new consolidated courthouse. The county wishes to combine the District Courts in Biddeford, Springvale, and York with the Superior Court in Alfred in one, easily accessible facility in Biddeford. *(continued on A2)*

(continued from AI York County Courthouse)

The selection committee investigated 28 sites around the county before narrowing the field to three locations: one near the current courthouse in Alfred and two sites in Biddeford. The first Biddeford site is at the end of Barra Road in the Robert G. Dodge Business Park. The second site is the former Pate property on Elm Street which was purchased by the city in late 2014. Because Biddeford is the population center of the county, the committee focused on the two sites here, and ultimately chose the 12.7 acre parcel on Elm Street because of its proximity to the Maine Turnpike as well as its higher visibility than the Barra Road site.

The new courthouse is estimated to be a \$65 million project. Ted Glessner, the State Court Administrator expects 68 people to work in the new courthouse and an average of 580 people will visit it each day. The combination of courthouse workers and daily visitors could add as much as \$500,000 to Biddeford’s economy. Mayor Casavant expects the new courthouse will draw new law offices as well as other court-related businesses to the City.

(continued from AI Electricity Supply Savings)

The city has been successful in obtaining excellent pricing for energy by working with Maine PowerOptions which is an aggregator for local Maine governments and non- profit organizations. By pooling together almost 800 member organizations throughout the state they are able to negotiate the best possible pricing for member organizations. Competitive pricing offers are presented to members for consideration and voluntary participation.

(continued from AI Open Government)

The *Open Government* subject areas include:

1. Elected Officials, Appointed Officials, and Elections
2. Administrative Officials
3. Meeting Information
4. Budget Information
5. Audit Information
6. Local Tax Information
7. Permits and Zoning
8. Public Records and FOAA Request
9. RFPs, RFQs, RFBs and Municipal Contracts
10. Lobbying & Advocacy Information

Although much of the information referenced under the tab is currently available throughout the City of Biddeford website, this information is not always easy to locate. The *Open Government* tab will provide direct access to *Open Government* topics in as few clicks as possible.

“The City of Biddeford is committed to open government and transparency. We will continue to promote openness and public participation in local government, recognizing that transparency is the foundation of public trust.” James Bennett, City Manager.

The *Open Government* section will be updated regularly to ensure information is current and relevant, with particular focus on ensuring availability of budget documents throughout the upcoming budget process.

Apartment Building Status Update

As of November 1, 2016 the following has been completed:

- 340 Apartment Building Requests have gone out (1st Request)
- 109 Apartment Building Requests have gone out (2nd Request)
- 155 Apartment Building Inspections Complete
- 36 Apartment Building Inspections are scheduled
- 90 Land Lord Meetings have taken place

Please call Code Enforcement for details 207-284-9236.

For email subscriptions, [click here](#)

For questions or comments:

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e. newsletter@biddefordmaine.org

Happy reading.